

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

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O R 271910Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6404

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 175

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC EI

SUBJ: EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE

SUMMARY: IN THEIR JANUARY 23-24 MEETING, EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS SPENT SOME TIME DISCUSSING PLO PARTICIPATION PROBLEM, BUT THEY FOUND NO SOLUTION AND TOOK NO DECISIONS. A TECHNICAL SUB-GROUP, HOWEVER, WILL MAKE A BEGINNING AT IDENTIFYING PROJECTS THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN AND IF EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE GETS MOVING. END SUMMARY

1. WE WERE BRIEFED BY BOTH NOEL DORR, IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR, AND SEAN KENNAN, WHO IS DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY OF FONOFF WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR EURO/ARAB RELATIONS.

2. OUR INFORMANTS SAID THAT PLO PARTICIPATION ISSUE IS STILL A "SPANNER IN THE WORKS" OF THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE. POLITICAL DIRECTORS SPENT SOME TIME DISCUSSING IT WITH A VIEW TO MAKING SUGGESTIONS FOR FONMINS' MEETING FEB. 13. BEYOND SAYING THAT THERE WAS "SOME CASTING AROUND FOR A WAY OUT," IRISH PROVIDED NO DETAILS OF DISCUSSIONS. INFO ADDRESSEES MAY GET MORE ON THIS. IRISH CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS. SWITCHING METHAPORS, DORR COMMENTED THAT THE PLO PROBLEM WAS LIKE "KING CHARLES' HEAD SITTING ON THE TABLE LOOKING AT US."

3. WHEN WE SAW THAT IRISH WERE NOT GOING TO VOLUNTEER ANY MORE INFORMATION ON PLO ISSUE, WE ASKED WHETHER KENNAN WANTED TO TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT HIS RECENT TRIP TO ARAB CAPITALS. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NOTHING AT ALL COMPLICATED TO REPORT. IRISH HAD NO EXPERIENCE IN ARAB WORLD BEFORE ASSUMING EC PRESIDENCY, AND THEY FELT ONE OF THEIR TOP MEN HAD TO MEET RIAD. IN OTHER WORDS, SAID KENNAN, "WE WANTED TO SHOW OURSELVES TO THE PRIEST." THERE WAS NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE PLO MATTER, ALTHOUGH BOTH SIDES OBVIOUSLY KNEW IT WAS THERE. (THIS IS LESS DETAILED THAN INFO CONTAINED IN EC BRUSSELS 597.)

4. THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE DID, HOWEVER MAKE SOME MINOR PROGRESS ON THE TECHNICAL (AS OPPOSED TO PARTICIPATION) ASPECT OF EURO/ARAB

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DIALOGUE. THEY REALIZED THAT THEY HAD NOT EVEN BEGUN TO CONSIDER WHAT SORT OF SUBJECTS THEY WOULD WISH TO RAISE WITH ARABS IF DIALOGUE EVER GETS MOVING. ALL MEMBERS OF NINE HAD GENERAL NOTION THAT A LEADING PURPOSE OF DIALOGUE WOULD BE "TO MERGE EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY WITH ARAB FINANCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED ARAB COUNTRIES." THERE WAS NO INTENTION -- ON EUROPEAN SIDE, AT LEAST -- OF GETTING BEYOND THIS INTO ANY POLITICAL AREA. THE EC "COORDINATION GROUP" FOR THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE WILL NOW TRY TO IDENTIFY THE

SORT OF PROJECT ON WHICH THE NINE WOULD HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER. THERE

ARE TWO TENTATIVE CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS: (A) THEY SHOULD INVOLVE AS MANY COUNTRIES AS POSSIBLE (THE MULTINATIONAL CRITERION); (B) THEY SHOULD BE OF BASIC KIND THAT COULD BENEFIT THE POOREST ARAB COUNTRIES. EXAMPLES MIGHT BE COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSTRUCTION. ROAD CONSTRUCTION, FOR EXAMPLE, MAY TURN OUT TO BE A PRIORITY. WE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY DISCUSSION -- EVEN VERY TENTATIVE -- OF ANY SINGLE SPECTACULAR PROJECT THAT WE SHOULD NOTE. KENNAN SAID THAT EUROPEANS WOULD BE GLAD TO FIND A PROJECT WITH REAL POLITICAL IMPACT BUT THAT THEY HAD NOTHING IN MIND AT THIS TIME. THEY WANTED TO AVOID ANY INTERFERENCE WITH THE EXISTING BILATERAL PROJECTS, WHICH MIGHT MEAN THAT THEY WOULD TAKE ON NEW ONES WHICH ARE TOO BIG FOR THE BILATERAL APPROACH. WE ASKED WHETHER WE COULD REPORT THAT THERE WAS DEFINITELY NO NEW "ASWAN DAM" UNDER CONSIDERATION, AND KENNAN REPLIED THAT THIS WOULD BE ACCURATE.

6. ON FEBRUARY 25/26, THERE WILL BE A FIRST MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS APPOINTED TO EXAMINE POSSIBLE EURO/ARAB PROJECTS. THE EXPERTS WILL THEN REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE COORDINATION GROUP FEBRUARY 27. WE ASKED WHETHER THIS COORDINATION GROUP HAS ANY FORMAL TITLE AND WHETHER IT IS AN ORGAN OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE. KENNAN REPLIED THAT THERE IS NO TITLE BEYOND COORDINATION GROUP AND THAT IT REPORTS MAINLY TO COREPER, SINCE ECONOMIC AS WELL AS POLITICAL

PROBLEMS ARE INVOLVED. THIS GROUP FUNCTIONS STRICTLY WITHIN EC AND DOES NOT ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE WITH ARABS ON ITS OWN. AT THE CLOSING OF THE BRIEFING, WE SAID THAT WE WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE ANOTHER BRIEFING AFTER COORDINATION GROUP MET FEBRUARY 27. KENNAN THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

7. COMMENT: DEPARTMENT MAY WISH PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON QUESTIONS WE SHOULD RAISE WITH IRISH AT NEXT EURO/ARAB BRIEFING OR ON US
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